

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
APRIL 10, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Munn, Pritchard, Roper, Steinfeld, Sherrard
Alternate members present: Fitzgerald, Kane
Absent: Zod
Staff present: Davis, Glemboski, Cullen, Doolittle

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF meeting of March 27, 2012.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of March 27, 2012 as written.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Munn. Motion passed 4-0-1, with Steinfeld abstaining.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - none

IV. SUBDIVISIONS

1. Colonel Ledyard Estates, Colonel Ledyard Highway

The Commission noted that this is scheduled for a hearing at 7:45 this evening.

V. SITE PLANS

1. Long Meadow Landing, 45 South Road – Request for 1-year start of construction extension

Joe Boucher, Towne Engineering, representing the applicant, addressed the Commission requesting the extension. He noted that the applicant is hoping the start construction in August.

MOTION: To grant a one year extension for start of construction to June 9, 2013 for Long Meadow Landing, 45 South Road

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Roper. Motion passed unanimously.

2. New England Cycle, 661 Gold Star Highway – Request for 1-year start of construction extension

Jeff Welcome, New England Cycle Works, addressed the Commission requesting the extension. Mr. Welcome noted that the delay is due to corporate restructuring.

MOTION: To grant a one year extension for start of construction to June 14, 2013 for New England Cycle, 661 Gold Star Highway

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Roper. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Groton Bible Chapel Youth Center, 66 Toll Gate Road

Chairman Sherrard noted for the record that the voting members for this application are Commissioners Fitzgerald, Pritchard, Kane, Munn as well as himself.

Norm Thibeault, Killingly Engineering Associates, addressed the Commission giving a brief history of the site and the proposed modifications. Mr. Thibeault discussed the sidewalk, landscaping, parking and stormwater runoff.

Staff noted that all other agencies and departments are ok with the plan. Staff reviewed the waivers requested and handed out a draft motion for discussion.

The Commission, Mr. Thibeault and Mark Spruance, Groton Bible Chapel, discussed the sidewalk in depth, including easements.

MOTION: To approve a waiver to Section 7.5-2 of the Zoning Regulations and to not require a frontage sidewalk along the western portion of the Toll Gate Road frontage based on the following finding:

1. There are two large specimen trees on the site that provide a physical limitation making the installation of a frontage sidewalk impractical along the western portion of the site.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Munn. Motion failed, 0-5-0.

MOTION: To approve a waiver to Section 6.12-4.C of the Zoning Regulations and to not require a 50-ft buffer between a watercourse and the directly adjacent stream belt wetlands and the developed land area based on the following findings:

1. The Commission finds that there is no site development proposed within the 50-ft buffer with the exception of new stormwater quality measures, including a water quality basin and a level spreader. The proposed measures will bring the site into greater conformity with the requirements of the Water Resource Protection District and enhance the quality of the adjacent watercourse.
2. The Commission finds that all stormwater quality systems and locations have been fully approved by the IWA permit and Groton Utilities.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Pritchard. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: The Planning Commission approves Site Plan Application # SIT11-21, for the Groton Bible Chapel Youth Center at 66 Toll Gate Road, subject to the following modifications:

1. Consolidation of the 3 lots shall take place prior to the recording of the final site plan in land records.
2. A note shall be provided on the plan stating, "Any changes in the approved uses of any building shall require an additional review by the Office of Planning and Development Services and approvals, as necessary, from the appropriate Town of Groton agencies".
3. The final plan shall be modified to incorporate the 5' wide stone dust path and a 5' wide bituminous sidewalk extending from the eastern site entrance to the "potential stone dust path" as shown in Exhibit A. The final plan shall include details for construction of the stone dust path and the sidewalk. A pedestrian easement shall be shown on the final plans and the final sidewalk easement document shall be submitted to the Office of Planning and Development Services prior to recording of the site plan.
4. A sidewalk agreement shall be recorded in land records at the time of recording the site plan. The agreement shall state that the owner of the property agrees to appear before the Planning Commission when development changes in the area, street tree conditions change on the site, or within a period not to exceed five (5) years, whichever occurs first, to allow for a determination to be made as to the need for the installation of a 5-foot wide sidewalk along the property frontage and connecting to the onsite sidewalk system. Said determination as to the need for the installation of this sidewalk shall be at the sole discretion of the Planning Commission.
5. The landscape plan shall be modified to include all non-invasive species that are approved by the Office of Planning and Development and shall also include the following:
 - a. A minimum of 14 native shrubs, at 10-foot intervals, along the eastern paved portion of the parking lot.
 - b. Two additional parking lot shade trees along the northern border of the paved parking area.

6. A note shall be provided on the plans stating, "A shared parking arrangement for the site has been approved in accordance with Section 7.2-6 of the Zoning Regulations".

7. All staff technical items shall be addressed.

The Planning Commission notes that this is an existing developed site and there are sufficient landscaping and shade trees currently on the site or are proposed on the plans to meet the intent of Section 7.4 of the Zoning Regulations.

The Planning Commission finds that the site meets the requirements for Shared Parking under Section 7.2-6 of the Zoning Regulations as provided for on the site plan. The institutional use requires 405 spaces and the site provides 180 paved parking spaces and 134 overflow grass/gravel spaces. The site has a mix of land uses with different operating hours and peak demands for parking thereby allowing utilization of the same parking spaces. The typical maximum parking need is approximately 100 spaces for Sunday services and the 314 spaces provided exceed the needs of the facility.

The Planning Commission finds that allowing a portion of the overflow parking to be on a pervious surface instead of a bituminous or concrete all-weather surface with curbing meets the intent of Section 7.2-13. The overflow parking will not be used on a regular basis and the Water Resource Protection District recommends the use of pervious areas for parking, especially for limited use areas.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Pritchard. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Colonel Ledyard Estates, Colonel Ledyard Highway

Staff noted that all other agencies and departments have reviewed the plans. The proposed road, open space, the waivers requested, trail options and utilities were discussed.

Paul Hallissey, engineer representing the applicant, addressed the Commission discussing the line of sight at the intersection of Colonel Ledyard Highway and Deerfield Ridge Drive.

MOTION: To close the public hearing for Colonel Ledyard Estates

Motion made by Roper, seconded by Steinfeld. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. SUBDIVISIONS

1. Colonel Ledyard Estates, Colonel Ledyard Highway

Staff noted that they will have a draft motion prepared for the Commission at the next meeting.

MOTION: To table Colonel Ledyard Estates to the next meeting.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Roper. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Land Use Regulation Update Project

Staff would like to bring Sections 1 & 2 before the Commission and take them to a Public Hearing. Staff will include these in the next agenda packet. Chairman Sherrard requested they be emailed to the members.

2. Discussion of the Plan of Conservation and Development Update and Process

Chairman Sherrard recommended that there be five members on the Consultant Selection Committee including appointing Commissioners Munn and Zod.

Commissioners Sherrard and Pritchard, along with Commissioner Munn as an alternate, were appointed by the Commission to the Steering Committee.

The members agreed by consensus with the committee make up and Planning Commission appointments.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Report of Commission

Commissioner Steinfeld and Staff briefly discussed the Wal-Mart appeal.

Commissioner Roper attended a Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) meeting this past week.

2. Town Council referral under CGS 8-24 regarding the TVCCA property at 38 Central Avenue

Staff discussed the currently leased TVCCA properties on Central Avenue and the proposed use as a daycare of 38 Central Avenue.

MOTION: The Planning Commission supports the project 2012-0105, Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) lease of Town property at 38 Central Avenue

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Roper. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Zoning Board of Appeals referral for April 25, 2012 Public Hearing – ZBA12-03, Young Residence, 52 Pearl Street

Staff briefly explained this application. The Commission had no comment.

4. New Applications
 - a. Precision Motors Site Plan, 2400 Gold Star Highway
 - b. Kate's Cafe Site Plan, 12 Water Street
 - c. Community Baptist Church Site Plan, 950 Gold Star Highway
 - d. North Woods Resubdivision, 1297 North Road

X. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

Chairman Sherrard noted that next year's CFPZA dinner at the Aqua Turf will be held on March 14, 2013.

XI. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff noted the two permits from the Inland Wetlands Agency included in this week's packet.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:38 p.m. made by Roper, seconded by Munn, so voted unanimously.

Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary
Planning Commission

Prepared by Katie Doolittle
Office Assistant II